

## Statistics

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### Population (2003)

Virginia:	6,302,562	metro	(2.6% of total U.S. metro)
	<u>1,083,768</u>	non-metro	(2.2% of total U.S. non-metro)
	7,386,330	total	

United States:	241,395,996	metro	
	<u>49,413,781</u>	non-metro	
	290,809,777	total	

### Farm-Related Employment (2000)

Virginia:	626,134 jobs	(14.4% of total Virginia employment)
United States:	25,834,574 jobs	(15.6% of total U.S. employment)

### Number of Farms (2002)

Virginia:	47,606	(2.2% of total U.S. farms)
United States:	2,128,982	

### Average Farm Size (2002)

Virginia:	181 acres
United States:	441 acres

### Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (2002)

Virginia:	\$2.4 billion
United States:	\$200.6 billion

**Rank among all States in market value of agricultural products sold (2002): #30**

### Top 5 Agricultural Commodities (2002)

Commodity	Value of receipts (thousand \$)	Percent of U.S. value
Broilers	390,300	2.9
Cattle and calves	322,331	0.8
Dairy products	267,386	1.3
Greenhouse/nursery	183,219	1.3
Turkeys	165,016	6.2

#### **Value of Agricultural Products Sold Directly to Consumers (2002)**

Virginia: \$16.8 million  
United States: \$812.2 million

#### **Farmers Markets (2004)**

Virginia: 83  
United States: 3,617

#### **Market Value of Certified Organic Commodities (2002)\***

Virginia: \$4.3 million  
United States: \$392.8 million

\*(Data may not reflect actual industry growth after Oct. 2002 implementation of USDA National Organic Program.)

#### **Certified Organic Acreage (2001)**

Virginia: 7,428 acres  
United States: 2,343,857 acres

#### **USDA-Accredited Organic Certifying Agents (2005)**

Based in Virginia: 1  
Total: 96

## **Marketing Products and Services**

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#### **Specific to Virginia**

#### **Future Farmers Visit USDA**

In May 2005, 15 Future Farmers of America (FFA) from Central High School in Shenandoah County were hosted by AMS at USDA. The FFA delegation visited the USDA Visitor's Center and heard presentations from AMS staff members about their jobs and how they relate to American farmers.

#### **Agricultural Field Day Held at Virginia State**

Virginia State University held an Agricultural Field Day in August 2004 at the experimental farm in Petersburg. AMS staff members addressed two workshops at the field day, speaking on marketing opportunities for farmers. About 250 farmers attended this event.

#### **AMS Explores Collaboration with Loudoun County Officials**

In July 2003 AMS met with Loudoun County officials to discuss ways in which AMS might be able to help with several planned initiatives to expand markets for local agriculture. Foremost among these initiatives is the transformation of Courtland Farm to an integrated "Country Life Center," which would serve as an entertainment and educational destination for local residents and tourists and a working agricultural research station, operated by Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Research would focus on small-scale agricultural projects suitable for an urban/suburban environment. The integrated complex is expected to feature a farmers market, a restaurant specializing in local foods, a visitor center, several farm plots dedicated to experimental agriculture, and a facility for horse and livestock exhibitions. AMS agreed to help Loudoun County officials assess the requirements for the planned farmers market and to find funding for the project.

#### **Farm Bill 2002 Listening Session**

AMS presented information about the agency's marketing and technical assistance resources at a USDA listening session aimed at small-scale and limited-resource farmers, which was held at Virginia State University in Petersburg in November 2002.

#### **Black Farmers Conference Held in Arlington**

At the National Black Farmers Association's Conference in August 2002 in Arlington, called *Bridging the Gap for Limited Resource Farmers*, AMS made a presentation on Project: United Exports, a program developed by AMS to assist minority, small, and disadvantaged farmers in uniting to export their agricultural products. AMS also managed an exhibit with publications to aid minority farmers in entering today's global marketplace.

#### **AMS Briefs Virginia Department of Agriculture**

In July 2002, AMS briefed the Deputy Commissioner for International Trade, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, on AMS' exporter assistance resources. AMS provided overviews of work in these areas and discussed how their activities help to promote and maintain an agricultural transportation rail infrastructure and help new and experienced agricultural exporters obtain the information needed to get their products to overseas markets at low cost.

#### **Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) Grants**

FSMIP provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system.

- In 2005, \$70,000 was awarded to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in cooperation with Virginia Tech, to evaluate the competitiveness of U.S. lumber in Latin America, identify barriers within the transportation and distribution systems domestically and in Latin America, and communicate results to the Appalachian wood industry.

- In 2005, \$40,000 was awarded to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to complete cost/benefit and feasibility studies for a roasting and/or shelling facility, and to explore ways to enhance the niche market value of Virginia-Carolina peanuts.
- In 2003, \$29,500 was awarded to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in cooperation with the Virginia Green Industry Council, to initiate a comprehensive marketing and educational program for consumers about plants and horticultural services, and to unite the Virginia horticultural industry in a common strategy to promote their products and services.

### **Regional Interest**

#### **USDA Farmers Market Teams with Networking Group**

In September 2003 AMS met with the newly formed Market Collaborative, a group of regional farmers market representatives established to improve farmers markets in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia. The group's focus is to bring together ideas, talents, contacts, and materials to make the markets more attractive to both farmers and consumers. The group represents 13 farmers markets in the region.

#### **Future of Food and Farms Conference**

AMS staff helped organize and participated as workshop presenters at the 2003 Future of Food and Farms Conference, held in Wilmington, DE. As part of the conference's planning task force, AMS helped frame the conference agenda and identified prospective speakers. During the conference, AMS participated in panel discussions related to Federal resources in the agricultural marketing sector. The event featured four major program themes related to agricultural marketing, food distribution and hunger reduction in the mid-Atlantic region.

### **General Interest**

#### **New Farm-to-School Marketing Publication**

*Eat Smart—Farm Fresh! A Guide to Buying and Serving Locally-Grown Produce in School Meals* (PDF) was published in December 2005 by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA. The publication, which helps school lunch programs find locally-grown produce, was developed by a multiagency task force that included an agricultural marketing specialist from AMS, four child nutrition specialists from FNS, and the Community Food Security Coalition, a non-profit organization.

#### **Farm-to-School Report**

*How Local Farmers and School Food Service Buyers Are Building Alliances* (PDF) helps small farmers and school food service buyers explore how they might establish direct marketing linkages.

#### **Marketing via the Internet**

*How to Direct Market Farm Products on the Internet* (PDF) is designed to help small/medium-sized agricultural producers better develop Internet-based sales transactions by recommending effective methods for reaching and retaining customers.

#### **Trends in Farmers Markets**

*U.S. Farmers Markets—2000: A Study of Emerging Trends* (PDF) assesses the importance of farmers markets as a distribution channel for farm products, documents the recent growth in farmers markets operations, and provides an updated profile of management, operations, and merchandising at farmers markets.

**Market Research on Small Meat Processors**

*Enhancing Commercial Food Service Sales by Small Meat Processing Firms* (PDF), published by AMS in cooperation with Texas A&M University, determines potential areas of competitive advantage for smaller scale meat manufacturing firms in supplying local restaurants and other local commercial food service accounts.